

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A source-side communication apparatus which selects a best path suitable for routing a call,
5 comprising:

source-side routing data management means for collecting information necessary for path calculation, evaluating possible paths with the collected information, and managing routing data that is obtained through the
10 path evaluation;

source-side best path finding means for finding a best path from among those listed in the routing data;

connection releasing means for releasing a particular connection when said source-side best path
15 finding means has found a new best path that is more suitable for the particular connection than a path being currently used, while maintaining the connectivity of other existing calls; and

new best path setting means for performing a call
20 connection procedure by using the new best path, after said connection releasing means has released the current connection.

2. The communication apparatus according to
25 claim 1, wherein said connection releasing means releases connections on an individual connection basis, or on an individual port basis.

3. The communication apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said new best path setting means sets up a connection over the new best path, while masking particular existing connections.

4. A destination-side communication apparatus which selects a best path suitable for routing a call,, comprising:

10 destination-side routing data management means for collecting information necessary for path calculation, evaluating possible paths with the collected information, and managing routing data that is obtained through the path evaluation;

15 destination-side best path finding means for finding a best path from among those listed in the routing data;

connection release requesting means for sending a connection release request for a particular connection when said destination-side best path finding means has found a new best path that is more suitable for the particular connection than a path being currently used, while maintaining the connectivity of other existing calls.

25 5. The communication apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said connection release requesting means requests releasing of connections on an individual

connection basis, or on an individual port basis.

6. A communications system which selects a best path suitable for routing a call, comprising:

5 (a) a source-side communication apparatus comprising:

source-side routing data management means for collecting information necessary for path calculation, evaluating possible paths with the collected information, and managing routing data that is obtained through the path evaluation,

source-side best path finding means for finding a best path from among those listed in the routing data,

connection releasing means for releasing a particular connection when said source-side best path finding means has found a new best path that is more suitable for the particular connection than a path being currently used, while maintaining the connectivity of other existing calls, and

20 new best path setting means for performing a call connection procedure by using the new best path, after said connection releasing means has released the current connection; and

(b) a destination-side communication apparatus comprising:

destination-side routing data management means for collecting information necessary for path calculation,

evaluating possible paths with the collected information,
and managing routing data that is obtained through the
path evaluation,

destination-side best path finding means for
5 finding a best path from among those listed in the routing
data, and

connection release requesting means for sending a
connection release request for a particular connection
when said destination-side best path finding means has
10 found a new best path that is more suitable for the
particular connection than a path being currently used,
while maintaining the connectivity of other existing calls.

7. The communications system according to
15 claim 6, wherein said connection releasing means releases
connections on an individual connection basis, or on an
individual port basis.

8. The communications system according to
20 claim 6, wherein said connection release requesting means
requests releasing of connections on an individual
connection basis, or on an individual port basis.

9. The communications system according to
25 claim 6, wherein said new best path setting means sets up
a connection over the new best path, while masking
particular existing connections.